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NOVEL TO FILM: *THE REMAINS OF THE DAY* AND THE ART OF ADAPTATION

A THESIS

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Distinction "All College Honors"

and the Degree Bachelor of Arts

In the Department of English

of the College of St. Benedict/St. John's University

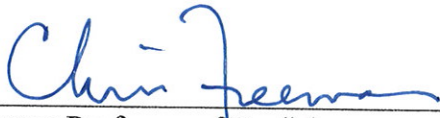
by

Shirley Richardson

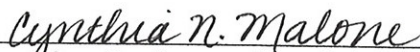
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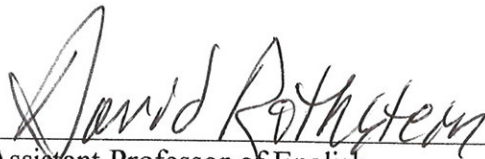
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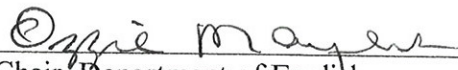
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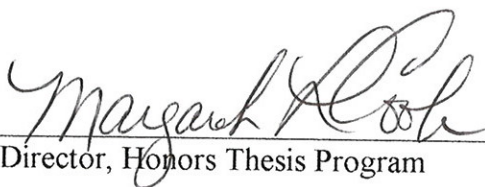
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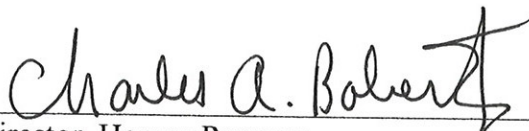
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Novel to Film

Film theorist George Bluestone cites Joseph Conrad's objective as a writer in his preface to *Nigger of the Narcissus*: "My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel--it is, above all to make you *see*" (Conrad in Bluestone 1). He compares novelist Conrad's goal to that of film-maker D. W. Griffith, who is alleged to have said, sixteen years later in 1913, "The task I'm trying to achieve above all is to make you see" (Bluestone 1). Both novelist and film-maker have stories to tell and both desire to create a vision of their stories for their readers and viewers, one with words on a page, the other with pictures and spoken dialogue.

The means of letting the audience see the story is different, and so is the relation between the audience and the medium. The reader of a novel gets a text that is ultimately the product of one mind, but the film-goer takes in a presentation of a story derived from the conceptions of a team of collaborators consisting of the director, screenwriter, cinematographer, art and set designers, and sound producer, to name a few. A novel's descriptive passages may be very detailed or leave the reader with large visual gaps, whereas each frame of the film fills the viewer's vision with scrupulously attended images, from the props to the setting to the costumes to every gesture and expression of the actor. The film-makers create all of the images for the audience. The film audience, however, cannot normally broach a character's unspoken inner thoughts except by gleaning them from an actor's performance, thoughts which could easily be articulated in the narrative of a novel. A novel allows the reader to pause, ponder, reread, and detect subtleties; a film takes the viewer by the hand at its own pace. The novel is an "art whose

limits depend on language, a limited audience and individual creation,” in contrast to film, which is an “art whose limits depend on a moving image, mass audience, and industrial production” (Bluestone 64). Novels and films necessarily reveal their stories differently because of their limitations.

With divergences in method, artistic creation, audience, and length, the adaptation of a novel to the screen necessarily involves a host of basic decisions about the features of storytelling, and films based on novels have handled the problems and challenges in a variety of ways. *The Remains of the Day* by Kazuo Ishiguro (1989) offered especially tricky problems for the Merchant Ivory team, whose 1993 film earned critical acclaim and a bevy of Academy Award nominations. Ishiguro’s Booker Prize-winning novel is narrated largely in discontinuous flashbacks by a character who sees his narrow world through a very dark glass. The reader manages to understand the events and character’s feelings much better than the emotionally stunted narrator is capable of. When the narrator is both purveyor of the story and himself the object of the author’s scrutiny behind his back, it would seem an impossible task to render the novel adequately on the screen. The film cannot capture all of the subtleties and ironies of the book, yet the film nevertheless offers a telling of the story that does convey the complexities of Ishiguro’s narrative and characterization.

As I examine some of the central issues involved in adapting *The Remains of the Day* into a film, I will focus largely on a few key narrative features: description, temporal order, dialogue, voice, and point of view. The director must see that the details of the settings and costumes fit the time period of the novel; the necessity of attending to the physical settings and appearances of the characters in a film can enhance our vision of the story, yet it can, paradoxically, detract from

the focus of the novel. The screenwriter must also adapt the dialogue to appeal to the film's present-day "mass audience," condense the novel into a work of film length, and worry about the confusion of flashbacks. Narrative voice and point of view involve the limits of knowledge and perspective and the problem of showing the inner workings of characters' minds, something which novels easily convey with the written word. I will also consider the matter of length and the circumstances of "viewing" the story: the novelist writes for a "limited audience" of readers who may read the novel over an unrestricted period of time, whereas the film-maker makes a film from a novel for a "mass audience" of viewers to watch in one sitting.

Although a novel does not describe every visual aspect, a film, narrative theorist Seymour Chatman points out, "cannot avoid a rather precise representation of visual detail" (30). The director must pay attention to the minutest detail of the scene, setting, and lighting, along with meticulous detail to actors' appearances, including not only their costume and coiffure but also every facial expression, physical gesture, and stance. All of this detail would be cumbersome to the narrative of a novel but is absolutely essential to a film. "All properties of a filmed object--form, color, size, etc.--can be grasped as a whole," whereas "objects described verbally . . . pass into the reader's consciousness in a slower way" and are gradually realized (Chatman 220-21). The reader may stop to think about or process physical descriptions as well as the plot at any point in the narrative, but the film-goer must immediately comprehend the film without pause for reflection until the film ends. Bluestone says that "between the percept of the visual image and the concept of the mental image lies the root difference between the two media" (1). Film-makers foist their visual perception of the narrative on the viewers, whereas readers form their own mental conceptions based on the author's descriptions. Physical descriptions actually interrupt the

flow of a novel's plot, but a film's narrative has no such verbal interruptions because physicality is visually depicted, even during dialogue. Unlike the narrative in a novel which pauses for descriptions, narrative in film is usually continuous. In film nothing is left to the viewer's imagination, whereas the reader of a novel creates visions as far as the imagination will carry him or her, which may be very limited for some. A film adaptation often obliterates the viewer's former images from the novel but for the visually unimaginative reader brings the novel to life. One of the ways a film condenses the length of a novel is by showing rather than describing physical descriptions. Cinema cannot easily summarize events in narrative statements and dialogue the way novels can. To summarize events, Chatman notes, "directors often resort to gadgetry" by using "montage-sequences," a sequence of a number of shots, or voice-overs (69). The director must take care not to let the physical aspects of the film detract from the narrative. Sumptuous scenes, elaborate costumes, background action, and even close-ups may distract the viewer from hearing the dialogue or following the plot.

In a novel events may be narrated in an order different from that in which they occur. The linearity of the novel may be interrupted with such temporal distortions as flashbacks, foreshadowing, or even an opening *in medias res*. Films may also play around with the order in which events take place. A screenwriter need not necessarily follow the order of events of the novel she is adapting; e.g., she may choose to adapt a nonlinear novel into a flowing chronologically ordered screenplay or add flashbacks to a novel with a linear ordering of events. The film-maker must take into greater consideration the ability of the viewer to follow the altered chronology than a novelist, whose reader can slow down or reread passages when met with a temporal switch.

Scriptwriters change the novel's dialogue in their adaptations for a number of reasons. In her interview with *Variety's* Daniel S. Moore, screenwriter Ruth Prawer Jhabvala says that from a novel she "note[s] the best passages of dialogue--but sometimes the best passages of dialogue don't adapt to film" (62). Sometimes what a reader has time to ponder and infer from between the lines in a character's speech must be articulated in a film so that the viewer has time to grasp the meaning. At other times a character's overly long speech needs to be condensed not only for time's sake but also so that the dialogue does not lose the listener's interest. The lines an actor speaks may be altered for the sake of realism--they must be in keeping with the perceived character. To the listener a character's speech may sound stilted if it is not changed to a more natural speaking dialogue. Jhabvala explains, "You can't give actors lines that are difficult not only to speak but for the hearer to understand. . . . You must know that this line, whatever meaning or weight it has in the book, you have to give it that same weight but in a much simpler way. A half a line in a film is like 10 lines you are reading, because the actor puts so much weight on it" (Moore 62). An actor's gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice add meaning to his or her lines. A screenwriter must give careful consideration to dialogue in the adaptation of a novel because the listener's interpretation varies from that of the reader.

The screenwriter faces a particular challenge in adapting a first-person narrated novel to the screen. A film cannot very easily get into a character's inner thoughts without doing voice-overs, an option which viewers would find distracting and obtrusive if it were used to convey all first-person narratives. Nor can a film show solely an individual's perspective without using contrived shots, such as was done in *The Lady in the Lake* with a camera attached to the character's chest throughout the film. Chatman observes that film characters' thinking must be

inferred from “what they overtly say and do,” a “restriction difficult” for a novelist (30). Rather than overusing the voice-over technique and having shots filmed so that they appear to be mostly from a singular perspective, screenwriters usually change the narrative to a third-person vision. Film narratives are external because the viewer must focus on characters rather than through them. But internal focalization can be achieved through such techniques as occasional voice-overs and camera shots from a character’s line of vision--the viewer can look with the actor at an object within the frame, or as the actor looks off-screen a cut can be made to what he sees or a cut can move from an object back to the actor looking at it (Chatman 159). The camera can also capture some of the character’s inner thoughts in close-ups of a good actor’s facial expressions.

In watching the film adaptation of a novel, the differences between the two make a quick impression on the viewer who has read the novel. Critics often immediately fault the movie for having deleted, added, or altered parts of the novel without seeming to notice the carry-over from the novel. According to Bluestone, “the final standard” in the film adaptation is whether the “film stands up as an autonomous work of art” (110-11). Some critics feel that the integrity of the book must be maintained for the film to be regarded as successful. If the film subverts the author’s intentions, then the adaptation is often criticized for its unfaithfulness. Brian McFarlane, a contemporary writer of novel-to-film adaptations, points out that, before a valuable evaluation can be made, one must identify the kind of adaptation the screenwriter chose to make. He notes that writers Geoffrey Wagner, Dudley Andrew, and Michael Klein and Gillian Parker all came up with three similar categories for classifying adaptations in their works (McFarlane 10-11). The first category includes adaptations which maintain a “fidelity to the main thrust of the narrative, to the author’s central concerns, to the natures of the major characters, to the ambience of the novel,

and, what is perhaps most important, to the *genre* of the source” with only a minimum amount of change (Klein and Parker 9). Most “classic” (Klein and Parker 9) and “Hollywood” (Wagner 222) novel-to-film adaptations fall in this category because audiences tend to expect to see faithful renditions of the novels they read. Peter Bogdanovich’s *Daisy Miller*, for example, is a “rigorously faithful film version” of Henry James’s novella (McFarlane 139). In the second kind of adaptation, the screenwriter reinterprets the narrative in some way. The film of *Death in Venice*, in which Aschenbach is no longer the writer he is in the novel but a musician, is an example of this type of adaptation (Wagner 224, 230). Third, some adaptations are merely inspired from a source and depart considerably from the original work. *Clueless*, loosely based on *Emma*, and *Apocalypse Now*, based on *Heart of Darkness*, fall into this last category. *The Remains of the Day* falls under the first category. Screenwriter Ruth Prawer Jhabvala faithfully transforms original works, with slight alterations, into the screenplays she writes for Merchant Ivory films. James Ivory directs faithful adaptations of novels. In his interview with *Variety*’s Jerry Roberts, Ivory says, “I am a firm believer in the rightness of the story” (54). Jhabvala remains true to the author’s intent, as she understands it, and adheres to the narrative strands of the book. The movie is also an artistic triumph regardless of whether the viewer has read the novel. It is a matter of some interest how the screenwriter, the director, the actors, and the team of film-makers accomplish this feat with a book that poses serious problems to the adapters.

The Novel

Ishiguro’s *The Remains of the Day* is the first-person narrative of Stevens, the late Lord Darlington’s head butler, whose self-discovery takes place on a motoring trip. Stevens writes his own narrative in the form of a travelogue during this 1956 six-day journey. Through a series of

flashbacks, Stevens reminisces about events during his service to Lord Darlington, and, as his narrative unfolds, he discovers that he has not lived the life he has prided himself on living. The reader gradually comes to realize the narrator's unreliability from his inability to comprehend the events, both personal and political, that he narrates and his faulty memory that leads to contradictions and corrections. For example, Stevens insists that Lord Darlington "never treated [Jewish staff] in any way differently on account of their race" (145). Shortly afterwards he contradicts himself when he relates the incident of Lord Darlington firing two maids because they are Jewish.

Sometime after Darlington's decease in 1953, an American named Farraday purchases Darlington Hall. After he suggests that Stevens should take his Ford to see the English countryside, Stevens realizes that he would like to visit former housekeeper Miss Kenton about her possibly returning to work at Darlington Hall. She left twenty years ago when she got married, but Stevens infers from her nostalgic letter and recent separation from her husband that she would like to return.

On his metaphoric life's journey, Stevens ponders seriously and anew the worth of his own life and the parts played by the three most important people in his life, Miss Kenton, Lord Darlington, and his father. He analyzes to an obsessive degree what defines a "great" butler-- "dignity" (33). He shows, through anecdotes, how his father "not only manifests, but comes close to being the personification itself, . . . of 'dignity in keeping with his position'" (42). Shortly after his father and Miss Kenton join the staff in 1922, Stevens and Miss Kenton get into some quarrels over his father, who soon has a disastrous fall. When Stevens privately tells his father that he must lessen his duties, neither of them forsakes his professional role as butler nor shows any

personal, heartfelt feelings toward the other. Two weeks later in March of 1923, while Lord Darlington is hosting a great international conference, Stevens' father suffers a stroke, and during the banquet of the last evening of the conference he dies. On his deathbed he tries to express his love to his son in a very poignant scene in which Stevens responds with a seemingly cold lack of emotion. Stevens suppresses his emotions and never "abandon[s] the professional being he inhabits" (42) as he stoically attends to the needs of everyone but himself at the conference. On his journey he reflects how he attained "a 'dignity' worthy of . . . my father" that night (110).

During the course of his journey, through several flashbacks, Stevens realizes that Miss Kenton and he had deeply cared for each other but never explicitly said so. At the time of their rendezvous, he learns that she and her husband are back together and are expecting a grandchild. As they part she tells him that she wonders what a life with him would have been like. He feels that "at that moment, my heart was breaking" (239). He has missed out on a life with the woman he loves and who loved him, and life looks bleak without her.

Stevens' journey also leads to the gradual self-recognition that he has been living under the illusion that he was "furthering the progress of humanity" through the "*moral* status" of his employer (114). Darlington, although he acted with noble intentions, was a misguided Nazi sympathizer who hosted informal but politically significant conferences and meetings that supported the movement in Germany that led to the Nazi regime. Stevens had blindly trusted in his employer, whom he now comes to recognize as the traitor he was later branded by newspapers. Now he can find no dignity in the life he has led and regards his life as a waste. But a stranger tells him, "The evening's the best part of the day" (244). His new goal in life is to "make the best of what remains of my day" (244). He resolves to look for the "key to human

warmth” by learning how to “banter,” the duty he feels his new employer expects him to fulfill (245).

Stevens unwittingly peppers his narrative with wit, humor, and irony. Even in his writing he maintains formalities and never “abandon[s] the professional being he inhabits” (42). Though the narrative is told in Stevens’ voice with his perspective, he knows far less than the reader. When, for example, Miss Kenton walks in on Stevens while he is “off duty” and insists on seeing the book he is reading, he recognizes only that “things between Miss Kenton and myself had reached . . . an inappropriate footing” (169). The reader sees that Miss Kenton is attracted to Stevens and her teasing him at times is a way of flirting with him. The language of Ishiguro’s prose reveals to the reader what is hidden to Stevens in his narrative.

The Film’s Reception

James Ivory directed Columbia Pictures’ 1993 film of *The Remains of the Day*. His usual collaborators, producer Ismail Merchant and screenwriter Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, teamed up with him again on this film. Mike Nichols and John Calley, as producers of the film along with Merchant, backed the film financially and oversaw the budget. *The Hudson Review* film critic Bert Cardullo reports that the novel “was supposed to have been adapted to the screen by Harold Pinter” who is “adept at adapting novels with first-person narrators,” but Ivory chose to work with Jhabvala’s third-person screenplay (617). Cardullo claims that the “solution” for first-person narration is to have the “camera eye . . . see as the narrator in the book does, see as if it were using the narrator’s eyes” (617). First of all, if the camera would show only what the narrator sees, the viewer, oddly enough, would never see the narrator. His solution also fails to tackle the problem of how the camera can “see” what the narrator is thinking. Even if the camera captures

some of the first-person narrator's thoughts and feelings in the actor's facial expressions and dialogue, the full range of inner thoughts the narrator articulates in the novel cannot be visually revealed on screen. According to Valerie Takahama, writer for *Knight-Ridder/Tribune News Service*, before Merchant Ivory made the film, Ishiguro had sold the movie rights for his novel to Pinter "for a Columbia Pictures film directed by Mike Nichols" but this "partnership failed to pan out" (1105K6817). Nichols told *The New York Times* interviewer Caryn James that Jhabvala's screenplay was "clearer and more accessible" than Pinter's and that Pinter turned down the offer of a "co-screenwriting credit" (13). Jhabvala was nominated for an Oscar for her screenplay adaptation (both *A Room with a View* and *Howards End* won her Oscars for her screenplay adaptations). Contrary to Cardullo, James feels that "the film's point of view is almost exclusively Stevens's: as in the novel, that device allows us to see and hear only what he does but usually to understand much more" (22). Ivory does film most scenes, with only a few exceptions, in such a way that the narrative focuses on Stevens, but by no means does the viewer get Stevens' exclusive point of view as the reader of the novel does.

The film-makers reunite Anthony Hopkins and Emma Thompson in their second Merchant Ivory leading roles, two years after their Academy Award-nominated performances in E. M. Forster's *Howards End*, for which Thompson won the Oscar. Hopkins as Stevens and Thompson as Miss Kenton inhabit the very being of Ishiguro's characters, and their on-screen rapport brings the characters to life. Both actors receive high praises for their performances in review after review. Pat Anderson, critic for *Films in Review*, says Hopkins has "never, ever been better. He is the spiritual essence of Stevens" (52+), and James extols Thompson for "a performance as exquisitely poignant as Mr. Hopkins's" (22). Author Richard Grenier attributes Hopkins with

“play[ing] Stevens as a real person, and what is remarkable about his performance is that one can actually see all the motions and feelings that he is painfully suppressing” (65+). These fine actors were also a wise choice because of their audience appeal. The publishers of the novel capitalized on their sales by putting a production still of the renowned Hopkins and Thompson on the book jacket. Both actors once again received Academy Award nominations for their performances in a Merchant Ivory film.

The New Republic film reviewer Stanley Kauffmann comments on James Ivory’s “superbly filmed” production, due to Ivory’s being “no longer (the British jibe) a Laura Ashley director, chiefly interested in decor” (32+). Ivory’s treatment of the “dignified” Stevens in “the professional being he inhabits” (42) as head butler to the lord of the manor home is never overshadowed by the four stately British houses filmed to give the viewer the magnificent Darlington Hall. *Time*’s Richard Corliss applauds Ivory and his cohorts for doing “their source one better, or one quieter: the film is even more discreet, more Stevens-like, than the book” (87+). Ivory is notorious for paying meticulous attention to detail in his films—he told interviewer Joan Juliet Buck that he hired Cyril Dickman, former steward to the queen, as an adviser to perfect the fictionalized high-society butler (162). He received an Academy Award nomination for director of *The Remains of the Day* and his film for Best Picture.

The Academy Award nominations that *The Remains of the Day* received can attest to the film’s artistic success. A close scrutiny of the film and novel will lead to an understanding of the challenges a screenwriter faces in trying to write a good faithful screenplay adaptation from a first-person narrative filled with inner thoughts. Ruth Praver Jhabvala’s Academy Award-nominated screenplay merits an analysis with Kazuo Ishiguro’s Booker Prize-winning novel.

In a scene-by-scene approach, showing ways in which the film compares and contrasts to the novel, I will analyze the art of the film adaptation of *The Remains of the Day*.

The Adaptation

In the book, chapter headings clearly distinguish the day and location of Stevens' present-day 1956 motor journey, and his memorable major events occur in pairs. Miss Kenton's arrival coincides with the moment when Stevens' father joins the staff as underbutler in 1922. One year later Lord Darlington holds his unofficial international conference in March of 1923 (not too long after the Versailles Treaty which so greatly disturbs Darlington), during which Stevens' father dies. In 1936, on a night when the prime minister and foreign delegates are conferring with Darlington, Stevens receives two shocking pieces of news: Reginald Cardinal informs him that Darlington's dealings in foreign policy are "amateur" and states his belief that Darlington is "being made a fool of" (222), and Miss Kenton tells him that she is going to marry Mr. Benn. Both the 1923 and 1936 events stand out in Stevens' memory as ones in which he feels a sense of "triumph" because of the "dignity" he achieved under these most stressful of circumstances (110; 227). Unlike the novel, the film does not indicate the current year of Stevens' narrative. The international conference takes place in 1935 (a date referred to only in Miss Kenton's voice-over) rather than in 1923, and the film, therefore, does not emphasize the role that the Versailles Treaty plays in forming Darlington's fascist opinions. Jhabvala certainly needed to condense the film's narrative, and her stress on Darlington's pre-World War II conferences on behalf of the Nazis makes sense in light of the effect Darlington's fascist sentiments and activities have on the way Stevens lives his life. The film-makers retain a political thread in the movie, and, like the novel,

the political details do not overshadow the focus on Stevens' character, around whom the narrative is centered.

Jhabvala does not dispense with Ishiguro's nonlinear format for the sake of fluidity in her screenplay. The film uses flashbacks when the narrative jumps from its 1950s "frame story" to the past. Apparently these jumps escaped *Commonweal* critic Richard Alleva, who wrongly claims that "Jhabvala has made the film story linear . . . a straightforward flashback beginning with Miss Kenton's arrival at Darlington Hall and ending with her departure; then the present-tense reunion of the two servants gives us a tristful coda" (14+). Grenier also found the film "much more connected" than the book (65+). Ivory presents the film narrative with a deceptively smooth flow, to the point that Alleva was not conscious of the flashbacks.

Because films cannot show a consistent first-person perspective without an excessive use of obtrusive voice-overs and contrived camera shots, *The Remains of the Day* narrative presents a challenge to film adaptation. Screenwriter Jhabvala creates a film-friendly narrative with her third-person adaptation of the novel. The narrative in the film adaptation focuses *on* the character of Stevens rather than *through* him, which is what cameras, by their nature, do. But the film-makers do give the audience the sense that they are often seeing Stevens' perspective. Close-ups of Hopkins' face reveal some of Stevens' thoughts and feelings. Frames of Stevens with what he is looking at and camera shots of his gazing face to the person or object he must be observing show what he is watching. Director Ivory is particularly fond of showing Stevens' views through windows. This focus on what he sees through windows not only gives the audience Stevens' view but also makes them conscious that they watch along with the character. The window metaphorically represents Stevens' first-person perspective of the world as well.

Bluestone suggests that visual images can “serve as cinematic figures of speech . . . to convey book ideas” (97). In the film, windows convey the characters’ feelings of isolation and imprisonment. They look through windows onto the world from which they are isolated. The viewer senses the character’s feelings of isolation or imprisonment from within the windows. From the novel, the reader learns that Stevens is imprisoned in the “professional being he inhabits” as a butler (42). When Stevens visits his father’s room, he thinks it is like a “prison cell” (64), and upon entering Stevens’ room Miss Kenton tells him that it “resembles a prison cell” (165). According to *The New York Review* writer Ian Buruma, “Merchant Ivory are specialists in gilded prisons, in people living in beautiful places, trapped inside themselves, hence their interest in E. M. Forster, in Henry James, and indeed in Kazuo Ishiguro” (39). The use of window shots shows not only the character’s visual viewpoint but also metaphorically captures the imprisoned characters which the book imparts. The camera shots also give the viewer the sense that the characters are trapped within Darlington Hall. Buruma observes, “Tony Pierce-Roberts’s camera beautifully captures the claustrophobia of life in a great country house: the narrow corridors of the servants’ quarters. . . . The camera rarely pulls back to provide space” (39). Even Richard Robbins’ “relentlessly ominous score” heightens the tension in the audience (Buruma 39). Ivory instills an uncomfortable, claustrophobic sensation in his audience by having the viewers feel trapped in the house as they look with actors through windows, into servants’ narrow or cramped spaces, and at close-ups.

The opening shot of *The Remains of the Day* begins with an “iris-in,” which Stephen Prince, writer of several books on film, defines as “a small circular opening that . . . open[s] up on the screen” (108). The film-makers show views through windows, including a porthole-type door

window resembling the circular pattern of the iris, and even a keyhole, to emphasize not only individual perspectives, especially Stevens', but also to make us self-conscious of ourselves as observers. The scene opens with a tracking shot of antique cars driving on a long country road which leads to Darlington Hall, its massive grounds with sloping hills, and a large tent. The traveling cars foreshadow Stevens' automobile trip, and the enlarging "iris-in" prefigures the gradual broadening of his mind on this metaphoric journey of life. A voice-over of Miss Kenton reading her letter to Mr. Stevens provides us not so much with her point of view as with crucial background information to the narrative, e.g., that their former employer Lord Darlington, who some regarded as a "traitor," has recently passed away and an American named Lewis has purchased Darlington Hall and will continue to employ Stevens as his butler. Although the novel does not have her letter include this background information on Darlington's traitorous activities or the new owner of Darlington Hall, Jhabvala finds a convenient means of bringing the viewer up to date with the use of a summary voice-over letter. The film simultaneously uses the voice-over in an added auction scene during the opening credits, without overtaxing the viewer with too much information. At this auction of Darlington Hall relics, a man, presumably the new American owner Lewis, bids for a painting until he becomes its proud possessor. His uncouth manner of bidding contrasts with the subtle proper style of the British auctioneers. The light-hearted, socially awkward, warmly chummy Lewis will contrast sharply with the serious-minded, coldly reserved, formal Lord Darlington, languidly played by James Fox.

The camera cuts to the interior of Darlington Hall, where we watch Stevens open the inner window shutters to let in the light, a precursor of the enlightening for him as well as for us. We observe him through a doorway from a hall of footmen. When Miss Kenton's voice-over casually

mentions, "I don't suppose there's much need for the small army of footmen and underbutlers that Lord Darlington employed," the footmen fade out of the shot just as Stevens enters that hall, a cinematic trick that highlights in a way the novel cannot the contrast from past to present-day at Darlington Hall, which is a dominant theme in the story. As Miss Kenton's voice-over continues, Stevens peers through the porthole-style window of the kitchen door (similar to the lens in the opening sequence) and sees a long corridor lined with paintings with presumably Miss Kenton approaching. She, too, fades out and her voice-over ends, leaving a blank-walled corridor down which Stevens takes a breakfast tray to Lewis. With fade-ins and fade-outs, the film shows in a matter of seconds what the novel conveys between the lines over many pages.

Before Stevens can stuff a piece of burnt toast into his pocket, Lewis notices and suggests a new pop-up toaster as a solution. Unlike Lewis, the formal Lord Darlington would have found it improper to have mentioned anything amiss. The theme of contemporary American ways superseding old-fashioned British forms pervades the film more than the novel. The film-makers' substitution of a British Daimler for the novel's American Ford complements head butler Stevens since both are dying British breeds. The film character of Lewis, played by Christopher Reeve, combines that of both Americans Lewis and Farraday in the novel. By having former congressman Lewis take over as the new owner of Darlington Hall, the movie emphasizes usurpation of the American with democratic views over the misguided British Nazi sympathizer. First-person narrator Stevens only gradually recognizes the value of democracy over fascism because for 35 years he has blindly lived under Darlington's guidance. The reader grasps Darlington's misguided political views sooner than Stevens does. The film viewer likewise sees the political machinations of which Stevens is ignorant. The film-makers cannot be as subtle as

Ishiguro in their presentation of the story because the screenplay presents the full picture to the audience. In the film, Lewis tells Stevens how he likes the obituaries in the paper and comments on the contrast in the way funeral orations are printed in British versus American newspapers. The film-makers draw attention to the difference between the British and Americans, capitalizing on new American ways taking over the dying old-school British. Like an American tourist, Lewis takes a snapshot of Stevens driving off in the Daimler on his journey, and we, too, are transported away from new Americanization to the British countryside and Stevens' old memories.

Now Stevens' voice-over of a letter he sent to Miss Kenton begins, and the camera cuts to a view from behind Stevens' shoulders through the front windshield, so we see the world through his eyes as we hear his voice. The film uses this technique of picturing the scene through Stevens' eyes frequently but for only a short period of time, suggesting the novel's point of view without overusing the device. The voice-over is used more sparingly. Again, the novel does not go into any details of the letter, but the additional information in the movie voice-over fills us in on events. During the voice-over we see Miss Kenton open and read his letter. Stevens' voice-over recalls the day Miss Kenton came to interview for the position of housekeeper. The film has her arrive on a bicycle on "one of the last days Lord Darlington met with his neighbors," who are gathered on the lawn just before they embark on a fox hunt. Not only does this scene provide a gorgeous view of Darlington Hall in its expansive country setting, but in this added scene the film-makers again give us a glimpse of the outmoded British past, the once popular, but now unfashionable, British sport of fox hunting, which epitomizes vintage British aristocracy. The film-makers go to great lengths to reinforce visually the contrast in the novel between the old and the new which Stevens is only now beginning to fathom. At the time we do not know why

Darlington henceforth has nothing to do with his neighbors. Later we can surmise that he becomes ostracized from them because they would have opposed his fascist views. This bit of added information seems too subtle an addition, however, for viewers to grasp, especially since we do not yet know about Darlington's misguidedness, and the neighbors really do not figure into the narrative. Stevens' voice-over concludes with his remembering that he had treated Miss Kenton with an "unwelcoming" manner, and the interview then takes place--the moment they meet occurs. The novel's temporal structure is a chronological series of scenes in the present-day motor journey interrupted frequently by lengthy scenes in the past that form the core of the narrative. Stevens' letter provides a natural means to segue to the long flashback that covers the earliest scenes of the story.

A rather amusing scene follows in which Stevens tells Darlington that he has hired Miss Kenton and an underbutler, whose name he mysteriously neglects to mention. Of course, Darlington asks for his name, and Stevens says, "Stevens, sir." "Stevens?" "Yes, sir." "That's *your* name." "Yes, it's my father, sir." This conversation leads to a surprise introduction in which Darlington sings Stevens' praises to his father. This scene added in the film efficiently shows Stevens' admiration for his father, Darlington's esteem for his head butler, and introduces the relationship Stevens has with Darlington.

The next segment of the film begins with a fade in through that same above-mentioned porthole kitchen door window with Stevens entering the hall from that door and Miss Kenton approaching him from the opposite end of the corridor. She stops Stevens to question him about where the silver pitcher she is carrying belongs. We view the entire scene through that circular window. Then the scene cuts to Stevens watching Miss Kenton on the lawn through Darlington's

bedroom window. After we see her clip some flowers in the garden, she brings a vase of cuttings to Stevens' dim room to brighten it. He obviously feels somewhat uncomfortable, either with her intrusion or of her thinking to bring him flowers. Rather than showing gratitude, however, he is short with her and, much to her surprise, points out some of her mistakes. He requests that she call his father "Mr. Stevens" instead of the Christian name of "William" she has been using.

Stevens implies that, unlike his father, she is inexperienced and does not know where everything belongs. In this scene the film carries over much of the conversation from the novel.

The film deletes the section of the novel in which his chat with a local man steers Stevens to a great view after he stops the car on his way to Salisbury. One of the significant purposes of the present-day segments is to allow Stevens to express his thoughts on life, particularly his life. The film avoids such philosophical disquisitions in Stevens' voice and prefers to present them in the form of invented dialogue. This vista opens his reflections in the novel on the "greatness" of *Great Britain* (28) which leads to his analyzing at quite some length the question of "*what* is a great butler?" (31). The film viewer remains unaware that Stevens is obsessed with this question and that his goal in life is to "inhabit" the role of a great butler. In the novel, he illustrates how his father fits the description of a great butler with three stories which show his father's "embodiment of 'dignity'" (34). The film instead adds a scene in which the issue of dignity becomes the topic of conversation for the servants gathered as they dine around a huge table. Stevens' father, whose character actor Peter Vaughan flawlessly inhabits, is the one who knows the official definition of a "great butler" as one who bears a "dignity in keeping with his position." In the novel Stevens describes his father as having just such a dignity in these exact words, the official Hayes Society's definition (33). Stevens' retelling of his father's butler-tiger story is transformed

to a scene in which the father himself dramatically tells the story, almost verbatim from the book. Stevens listens approvingly while we get a sense of what “dignity” is all about for him. The film thereby conveys the content of Stevens’ philosophy in an effective dramatic scene. The narrator’s discourse on greatness, which he learned from his father, leads to a series of scenes chronicling his father’s decline. The film stays true to this sequence, though the temporality is undisturbed because the book’s return to the present-day has been omitted. The film does not shy away from jumps back and forth, but by turning the novel’s commentary into a scene the film keeps us in the past. The screenwriter adds fluidity to the film by remaining in the past at this point in this nonlinear narrative.

When Stevens’ father leaves the broom and dustpan on the stairwell landing, we hear an ominous drumbeat. Miss Kenton happens upon them and nearly puts them away, but on second thought she decides to pretend that Stevens has left them so that she may draw his attention to his father’s blunder. After Stevens’ earlier remonstration with her, she eagerly strives to prove that she does a better job than Stevens’ father. In the novel Miss Kenton tells Stevens that she noticed “a large drop on the end of his [father’s] nose dangling over the soup bowls” (60). Ivory makes full use of this image in a memorable scene in which Stevens and his father are serving Darlington and seven important guests, including young Cardinal, played by Hugh Grant. While everyone engages in a political discussion on Monsieur Dupont, and Darlington then expresses his sympathies toward the Germans, we anxiously watch a large drop dangle from Stevens’ father’s nose while he is pouring wine at the table. We watch aghast as the suspended drop eventually falls, probably into someone’s food, under the very noses of everyone present. The dinner guests apparently never notice, but Stevens discreetly offers his father a handkerchief once he has

stepped away from the table. The scene ends with Cardinal posing the question, "What about the Jews?" Viewers may lose sight of the political discussion because their concentration is so focused on that dangling drop and their subsequent revulsion at the prospect of someone ingesting it. The film-makers show a scene which creates a vividly visual impact, but in the process the viewer, unfortunately, very likely misses the relevance of the dinner topic. The concurrence of the two matters is an efficient condensation, yet it creates a competition for our attention while the full side-by-side narrative in the novel lets us absorb both.

The ensuing Chinaman scene deftly encompasses the narrative tension between Stevens and Miss Kenton, with their dialogue following much of that of the novel. Miss Kenton adamantly insists that he affirm she knows where things belong and suggests that Stevens' father be relieved of some of his responsibilities. Stevens obdurately attempts to avoid confirming that she is correct because he would, therefore, have to admit that his father has been remiss in his duties. While Stevens forestalls her, he looks at the awaiting Miss Kenton through a keyhole. We see his perspective as we also view her through the small keyhole shape, which seems representative of his narrow-minded view. The trivial subject of their dissension turns out to be a mere ornamental Chinaman statue with a laughably bobbing head. When the camera cuts to the Chinaman, the music emphasizes the humor of the situation by momentarily interrupting the tense atmospheric notes with a comically familiar Chinese tune. A reader could easily bypass the subtle humor of this scene because of the intense emotional strain between these two characters. Film, unlike the language-restricted novel, uses the element of music to lend expression to the narrative, in this particular scene, humor, something Stevens cannot understand and cannot therefore knowingly convey.

In the novel, Steven reflects on the aforementioned scene in which he attributes Miss Kenton with having said, “these errors may be trivial in themselves, . . . but you must yourself realize their larger significance” (59, 60, & 62--the quoted statement appears in three instances in the novel). Upon further reflection, however, Stevens questions whether Miss Kenton “spoke quite so boldly” (60). Then he recalls that Darlington rather than Miss Kenton spoke these words. Stevens also changes his mind as the novel progresses about what he thinks Miss Kenton says in her letter. Critic Richard Alleva observes that Stevens’ monologue is “couched in a language that demands the reader’s mistrust” (14+). By having Stevens sometimes change his mind later about what he remembers, the author reminds us that we are reading an unreliable narrative, written from Stevens’ perspective of events the way he remembers them. Since the film is not in first-person, the film-makers cannot address the way Stevens’ memory affects his narrative, and they therefore lose a significant aspect of the book. Film cannot very easily show the various possibilities of what may or may not have occurred. The viewer trusts the narrative of the film, but the reader does not trust the narrative of the novel.

As Darlington and his guests, in the summerhouse, lightheartedly speculate on how Congressman Lewis got his fortune, we watch along with them through the window Stevens’ father trip over the edge of the patio and spill the tea tray he was carrying. Stevens immediately appears and asks his father, “What happened?” One of the guests replies, “He tripped over with the tray.” Stevens responds, “Yes, I saw it, sir, from the window.” Like Stevens, we, too, see his father’s accident through a window. Although he does not witness his father’s fall in the novel, Jhabvala chooses to have him see what we see. The film often shows what Stevens sees or focuses the camera on him so that the audience feels it is observing much of what Stevens sees or

feels. The film-makers wisely chose not to restrict themselves to the contrived filming of a first-person film narrative, but they impart to the viewer much of the novel's first-person perspective with their camera shots and the use of windows.

At the time Darlington requests Stevens to reconsider his father's duties, the film also has him tell Stevens about his friend, Herr Bremann, who killed himself. He laments not having lived up to his promise to help his German friend and blames the Versailles Treaty for making a liar of him. In the novel, Stevens overhears Darlington tell a "colleague from his lordship's Foreign Office days" (72) much of this speech on how he feels obligated to help Germany, especially because of his loyalty to Bremann. In the film, however, we hear with Stevens the explanation behind Darlington's German sympathies so that our perception is the same as Stevens'. The reader understands that Stevens, because of his position as butler, overhears a great deal, but the viewer would regard Stevens as a snoop if he were seen eavesdropping. Jhabvala efficiently condenses all of this material into one scene, thereby shortening the narrative time for the film.

When Stevens tells his father in the book that he has assigned different duties to him because he is no longer capable of handling his current duties, we feel the repressed emotional stiffness of their relationship. Neither "abandon[s] the professional being he inhabits" (42) because these butlers must uphold their "dignity" at all costs, even at the expense of a warm father-son relationship. The film maintains most of the dialogue from the novel and poignantly captures this scene. Shortly afterwards, Miss Kenton and Stevens observe through a window his father meticulously checking the patio stones where he fell. In the novel Stevens believes Miss Kenton "was feeling a certain sense of guilt" as they watched (66-67). The reader senses that Stevens attributes to her the guilt he feels for hurting his father's sense of dignity. Although the

film may not convey his and/or her “guilt” in this scene, we behold with them through the window a pitiable man. Stevens presents a trolley with mops and brushes to his father, who asks his son a childish question and zealously scurries to polish a doorknob, leaving the instructing Stevens in mid-sentence. Stevens’ father feels a loss of dignity and regresses to a child-like condition because of the new demeaning responsibilities his own son assigned him. The film captures how “he went about his work with such youthful vigour” (78) to prove that, despite his age and recent fall, he can youthfully perform his duties with alacrity. Vaughan exudes energetic youthfulness in this scene. Overtaxing his body, however, brings on a stroke while he is pushing his trolley. Ironically, the very object Stevens gives his father to help relieve him of his duties and undue stress induces his apoplexy. Stevens himself pries his father’s hands off of their grip on the trolley. The movie visually adheres to Stevens’ narrative in the novel.

With cinematic devices, the film emphasizes the importance of the behind-the-scene roles Stevens and his staff perform. Cinema can use montage sequences to summarize events which novels verbally narrate one by one (Chatman 69). Superimposed scenarios of the staff busily making preparations for the imminent conference fade in and out in a summary montage sequence while in a “military-style ‘pep-talk’” Stevens tells his staff, “History could well be made under this roof” (77). Readers would not pause to ponder the many tasks the servants perform for Darlington, whose conference itself would be of greater interest than the preparations that go into making it successful, yet the film can show in short order the tasks that preoccupy Stevens. In the novel Miss Kenton, under the duress of these preparations, irritably chides Stevens for constantly checking up on her work and asks him to communicate with her by note or messenger in the future, an evidence of tension between the characters that Jhabvala unfortunately lost by deleting.

Coincidentally, later in the novel and film, Stevens himself tells Miss Kenton to communicate with him “by written message” (175). Stevens the narrator may be blurring incidents, or he may want to hurt Miss Kenton the way she hurt him. The reader receives no explanation for this odd coincidence. In the novel, after Miss Kenton’s angry words, she does an about-face when she cares for Stevens’ dying father because she sympathizes with Stevens’ need to perform his duties. The viewer would find her quick change of heart confusing. Jhabvala’s choice to delete the scene rather than confuse the viewer makes sense. Although she loses the additional tension between Stevens and Miss Kenton, by giving her screenplay a coherence Stevens’ narrative lacks, she gains the viewer’s trust in the narrative. Film cannot show the unreliable first-person narrator without confusing the viewer.

While Darlington gives a speech during the conference about his need to help Germany, the camera focuses our attention on three members of his audience, Lewis, Dupont, and Stevens. The viewer’s interest lies in these characters’ actions rather than Darlington’s words. As Dupont and Stevens leave to soak the former’s feet, Lewis jumps at this opportunity to be alone with him and warn him to “restrain the Germans.” Just as a servant fetches Stevens to tend his father, Dupont’s response that “Germany needs peace” is barely audible. The book never hints at how Dupont personally feels about the conference’s arguments for Germany or Lewis, who continuously corners him for private chats about how Darlington and the other conferees are manipulating Dupont. Lewis seems “duplicitous” to Stevens (87), so it seems odd that Jhabvala would conflate Lewis’ character with Farraday’s and make Lewis Stevens’ present-day employer. Yet, unlike the readers, viewers do not see Stevens’ interpretation of Lewis, who, of course, actually upholds just anti-fascist views while the misguided Darlington supports traitorous ideals.

It follows from Jhabvala's decision that Stevens gains as his new mentor the democratic, anti-fascist who serves in both film and novel as a correction to the fascist attitude inherent in Darlington's aristocracy. Lewis promotes democratic ideals. As his employer, Lewis encourages Stevens to think for himself, voice his opinions, and see his own country.

The film slightly alters the scene where Stevens awkwardly visits his father's bedside by distracting the viewer with adding Stevens' mother to the dialogue. As in the book, his father demands to know, "Is everything in hand?" The movie inserts a couple of lines in which his father calls Stevens "Jim" and proceeds to tell him how he "fell out of love with your mother. I found her carrying on with. . . ." The book never mentions Stevens' first name. Nor does the book make mention of Stevens' mother. Stevens' father continues, as in the book, with, "I hope I've been a good father to you." Jhabvala brings in Stevens' absent mother in a somewhat feeble explanation for the cold exterior of these men. The reader notices Stevens' omission of his mother in his narrative because his father figures so prominently in it. Because the movie viewer, however, would not wonder about his mother since the narrative is not Stevens', Jhabvala gives her some significance by bringing her into the script. Even though it would be out of character for Stevens the narrator to use his own first name, Jhabvala realistically has Stevens' father call his son by his Christian name in this intimate scene. Stevens' father realizes that he was so caught up in fulfilling his role as butler that he neglected his role as father. Now, on his deathbed, he regrets that he has missed out on a loving relationship with his son and knows he does not have "the remains of the day" to change his life. The film's interpolation of Stevens' mother detracts from this scene's fragile father-son moment because the poignancy lies in Stevens' father's dying, heartrending awareness of his irredeemable relationship with his son.

The narrative has been building up to the moment when we will learn whether the delegates manage to sway Dupont into siding with them for peace for Germany. At the closing dinner, Dupont, much to our surprise since he has been in a foul mood because of his sore feet, announces that he will do what he can to influence France to be a friend to Germany. Although in the film he does not bring up Lewis' deceitfulness, in the novel he exposes Lewis for "trying to sow discontent and suspicion" (100). Lewis drunkenly replies that Darlington is the manipulative one, an "amateur": "Gentlemen like our good host still believe it's their business to meddle in matters they don't understand" (102). He concludes by making a toast to "professionalism" (102). The film condenses Dupont's and Lewis' speeches considerably but captures the gist of their words from the novel along with the tense atmosphere. Darlington's response to Lewis' accusation is nearly word for word from the book. He says that he would call Lewis' "amateurism" "honour," and "professionalism . . . mean[s] serving the dictates of greed and advantage rather than those of goodness and the desire to see justice prevail in the world" (103). Lewis apparently retires, never to be seen again in the novel. To ease the tension after the dinner, Jhabvala adds a scene which shows the good-natured Lewis saying to Darlington, "hope there are no hard feelings." The kind-hearted gentleman replies, "Oh, no, my good boy. I like a good and proper fight." This additional interaction between the two men leads Stevens and the viewer to lessen any animosity they may feel toward Lewis, for whom Stevens will one day work. Moreover, the book offers the readers leisure to readjust their impressions of Lewis as Stevens reexamines the past, whereas the movie has to present Lewis at all times as a positive force in contrast to Darlington. The book presents Stevens' unfavorable view of Lewis; the movie has to take a stance on Lewis from the outset.

The truth behind Lewis' speech, however, eventually destroys Darlington, the man for whom Stevens lives. In disbelief Stevens hears Lewis' all-too-accurate descriptions of Darlington, who does not heed Lewis' advice. That Stevens' father, whom he also respects, dies during the time of Lewis' prophetic words--"you're headed for disaster"--seems significant. Stevens aspires to live a life worthy of these two key figures who realize too late that their life's ambitions were misdirected. Stevens looks back on that night "with a large sense of triumph" because he thinks he attained a "dignity worthy of . . . my father" (110) while "he has applied his talents to serving a great gentleman . . . to serving humanity" (117). Stevens' father dies while serving this "gentleman" rather than meeting the needs of his son. Ironically, Stevens loses his sense of dignity when he eventually realizes that the man he served did not serve humanity.

Stevens prides himself on attempting to fulfill all of his employer's expectations of him. The film retains the droll segment in which Darlington asks Stevens to tell his 23-year-old godson the facts of life and, subsequently, Stevens intrigues Cardinal with his subtle euphemisms. The reader and viewer grasp the confused Cardinal's unwittingly humorous double entendres which Stevens obviously mistakes for their possibly somewhat indecorous meanings. Later, during the conference after-dinner socializing, Cardinal pursues their former topic of conversation and catches Stevens completely off guard. Miss Kenton has just informed Stevens that his father passed away, and Stevens, feeling too busy to see his deceased father just yet, promptly returns to the guests. He feigns a lightheartedness, but Cardinal notices Stevens' troubled face. A few repressed tears escape. Stevens must not "abandon the professional being he inhabits" (42), whether in educating Cardinal about sex or attending to the needs of his master's guests at the time of his father's death. Hopkins inhabits the character of Stevens so well that the viewer can

read the suppressed emotions behind his staid exterior. The principal manner, in fact, in which the film compensates for the loss of a first-person narrator is in the superb acting of Anthony Hopkins, whose subtle facial gestures express the inner mind of the character with eloquence.

After Stevens sees his deceased father and sends the doctor to care for Dupont's sore feet, the book and film cut to his present-day motor journey. In the novel he reflects that a "great" butler must serve humanity through his gentleman employer until the car's overheating disrupts his thoughts (117). David Denby, *New York* movie reviewer, makes the claim that "Stevens betrays everyone who needs him--everyone, that is, but his employer" (74). Darlington, however, is the one person Stevens overtly betrays in his denials of him. Stevens denies having worked for "that Lord Darlington" (120) to the chauffeur who adds water to the car and then ponders his denial. He had previously made the same denial to one of Farraday's guests. He rationalizes these denials by thinking he was "avoiding" [the] unpleasantness" of hearing further "nonsense" about Darlington, "a gentleman of great moral stature," for whom he is "nothing but proud and grateful" to have worked (126). In the film Stevens denies knowing Darlington to a grocer who, holding a letter for him from Miss Kenton, asks whether he knows "a Lord Darlington, some kind of Nazi."

While he reads this letter in his car, Miss Kenton's voice-over says that she will be glad to meet him at the Seaview Hotel. The film's version of Stevens' betrayal uses Miss Kenton's letter and voice-over as a bridge to the next flashback sequence. The camera cuts to Miss Kenton's introducing two housemaids to Darlington, the Jewish German girls Elsa and Irma, with whom he speaks faulty German. Visitors arrive, discussing fascism and how concentration camps are no more than mere prisons. Miss Kenton's former co-worker and future husband, Mr. Benn, serves

as butler to one of them. In a tête-à-tête Benn says to Stevens, “It seems to me, Mr. Stevens, you may be a well-contented man.” These are almost the exact words Miss Kenton tells Stevens just after she has begun seeing Benn (173). Stevens proudly responds to Benn that one cannot “call himself well-contented until he has done all he can to be of service to his employer . . . [who] is a superior person . . . in moral stature.” These words come from his above-mentioned reflections and his response to Miss Kenton (126, 173). Benn doubts that anything of moral stature is taking place. Stevens claims he never listens because that would distract him from his work.

Since the novel consists of Stevens’ narrative, readers know that he obviously hears a great deal. But in the film, viewers may not be sure how much he actually overhears, and here we are led to believe he is oblivious to the political activities in the house. The movie does not show that Stevens earlier reported to Darlington what he had overheard between Lewis and Dupont, as he does in the novel. After Miss Kenton declines Benn’s invitation for her to join them, Stevens tells him, “I’d be lost without her.” Although he never expresses his feelings for Miss Kenton in such bold terms in the book, he feels “concerned” when she later threatens to leave (150). The reader senses how he feels about her without his explicitly saying so. In fact, we get the impression that he is incapable of expressing his feelings about her.

Stevens never meets Benn in the book, but the film must show what the novel expresses in words. His meeting Benn gives him and the viewer a personal introduction to the man Miss Kenton eventually marries rather than mere hearsay descriptives from her. Jhabvala works in the novel’s basic narrative strands with relatively minor alterations to the book’s narrative. In this case, Benn, an important intruder into Stevens’ world, is a figure in Stevens’ narrative, and it is significant to the narrowness of that world that he never actually lays eyes on the man he cannot

admit to be his rival for Miss Kenton's affections. The film, to make Benn a real presence in the story, naturally shows him in the flesh; his meeting with Stevens is inevitable once she decides to introduce the character on the screen.

A rather confusing change occurs in the screenplay, however, with regard to the Jewish girls. In the novel they are presumably British, but they are German Jewish refugees in the film. Since Darlington holds fascists sympathies, why, Buruma pointedly asks, "would he have employed refugees in the first place, let alone welcomed them to his house in broken German?" (39). Cardullo assumes that once Darlington fires them, the two unemployed women are returned to Germany, "whence they are dispatched to concentration camps" (619). Although Cardullo's conclusion is not entirely impossible, nothing in the film suggests what he infers. By making the maids German, while laying herself open to the charge of implausibility, Jhabvala creates more sympathy for the young women and a greater antipathy towards Darlington when he fires them. Grenier mentions that Jhabvala herself was a Polish Jewish refugee and producer Nichols was a German Jewish refugee (68). British or German, the issue for book reviewer Gabriele Annan is Ishiguro's choice to make the maids Jewish. Annan faults Ishiguro for making a "gross sociological error" with this insight: "I would be prepared to bet that before the arrival of the first German refugees no Jewish maid had ever been seen in an English country house: not for anti-Semitic reasons, but because Jews didn't go in for domestic service" (4). The reputedly thorough-researching Merchant Ivory team retains the implausibility while heightening the emotional effect.

Darlington's dismissal of the Jewish girls sticks close to the book. While the Jewish girls clean and replenish the fireplace as Darlington walks by them, in a voice-over he reads about the

gulf between the Jews and Europeans. He later tells Stevens to “let the refugee Jewish girls go.” Stevens mildly points out that “they work well and are clean.” Darlington retorts, “They’re Jews.” Although in the novel Stevens asserts no such objection to his employer, his movie response calls for an explanation to Darlington’s bidding. The audience hears Darlington’s point-blank anti-Semitic reply that he fires the maids because “they’re Jews.” Stevens’ voiced objection, however, is uncharacteristic of this servant who trusts his master completely. When Stevens informs Miss Kenton of this news, she strongly objects, “It will be wrong, a sin as any sin ever was one,” and insists that she will leave. Stevens replies that his employer knows best: “There are many things you and I don’t understand, whereas his lordship understands fully.” Their dialogue comes straight from the book (149). In the novel Stevens claims that Darlington was not anti-Semitic, but the reader discovers Stevens’ opinion cannot be trusted on this matter. He follows up this assertion by blaming a short-lived “blackshirt” influence on Darlington’s dismissing the Jewish girls. In the movie we see (and hear) that Darlington’s reading of *Mein Kampf* (Cardullo 619) incites this action. Since the novel indicates that a year passes before Darlington tells Stevens that he regrets having fired the Jewish girls, other scenes precede this one in the film, such as the hiring of one of the replacements of the Jewish maids. The maid replacement would have occurred immediately, not after the lapse of a year. In the film, the intervening scenes indicate a passage of time and add linearity to the narrative.

After Miss Kenton assures Stevens that she will oversee and improve the young woman (Lizzie) with “reserved” references whom they interview, he teases Miss Kenton about her earlier threats to leave because of the German girls’ dismissal. She explains that she will not be leaving: “All I see out in the world is loneliness and it frightens me. That’s all my high principles are

worth, Mr. Stevens. I'm ashamed of myself." Her words are similar to the ones in the book, only slightly altered (153). This conversation occurs in the scene just before Stevens informs her of Darlington's change of heart toward the Jewish girls rather than when they hire the new housemaid (152-53). Jhabvala writes Stevens a sympathetic reply: "Miss Kenton, you mean a great deal to this house. You're extremely important to this house, Miss Kenton." This time they have Stevens express how he feels about Miss Kenton directly to her, but he uses the euphemism "this house" for "me." They reiterate Stevens avowing his feelings so that the viewer understands what the reader comprehends by reading between Stevens' emotionally paralyzed lines. The film's showing that Stevens cares for Miss Kenton allows the viewer to see how she might be attracted to this emotionally repressed man.

At this point the film brings us back to the present with Stevens hailing a ride because he negligently lets the car run out of gas. The scene from the novel would take more time than it merits to show in the film: Stevens meets Mr. Taylor on a path after he packs a briefcase and, by the dim light of a bicycle lamp, descends a number of fields toward a village. In a pub, evidently part of the Taylor's bed and breakfast establishment where Stevens spends the night, the townsfolk mistake him for a "gentleman," and Stevens never attempts to dispel their misconception. In the film Smith, a local, expounds on what a "gentleman" is: "It seems to me it's a name that every man in the country has a right to. It's one of the advantages and privileges of being born English that you can express your opinion freely and vote in your member of Parliament or vote him out. That's what we fought Hitler for." In the novel, Smith is defining "dignity" rather than "gentleman" with these words (186). "Gentleman" works well in the film because a "gentleman" is something the viewer, along with the townspeople, can see in Stevens'

deportment, whereas “dignity” cannot be seen so much as felt. Stevens, carried away in his guise as a gentleman, deceives the villagers by saying that in the early 1930s, just before the war, his concern was with international affairs, foreign policy, but only in a “nonofficial capacity,” and that eminent personages such as Churchill came to the house. When Dr. Carlisle turns up, Stevens uncomfortably continues his ruse by telling him that it was his good fortune to consort with many men of influence from Europe and America. Stevens hastily retires for the night when he detects Carlisle’s skepticism.

After Taylor shows him to his room, the room of his son who had died at Dunkirk, Stevens sits and observes the room which fades into another of Stevens’ Darlington Hall memories relevant to his preceding conversation with Smith. One of Darlington’s guests, Spencer, arrogantly asks Stevens his opinion on three political questions. To each question Stevens responds, “I’m sorry, sir, but I’m unable to be of assistance in this matter.” Spencer confidently claims that he has proven his point--political affairs cannot be left in the hands of the general public. He then looks contemptuously at Stevens. Ironically Darlington and his cohorts turn out to be the ones whose misdirected political action goes awry. The film omits the ensuing scene from the book in which Darlington apologizes to Stevens for “the ordeal we put you through” (196). He expounds on his anti-democratic ideals and poses to a certain degree a reasonable argument for fascism: “The world’s far too complicated a place now for universal suffrage The few people qualified to know what’s what are talked to a standstill by ignorant people all around them,” and people continue to suffer because nothing ever gets resolved (198). The film audience does not realize the effect Darlington’s values have on Stevens’ sense of “dignity”: ““This employer embodies all that I find noble and admirable. I will hereafter devote

myself to serving him.’ This is loyalty *intelligently* bestowed. What is there ‘undignified’ in this?” (200-01). Film simply cannot convey the deep reflective thought of Stevens that the novel does. In deleting the section which portrays a sympathetic Darlington who acts on noble, however misguided, instincts, Jhabvala engenders in the audience a dislike for a cold, ignorant master behind Stevens’ somewhat miserably wasted life.

The camera cuts to Carlisle giving Stevens a lift to his car. He correctly guesses that Stevens is a “manservant.” Their conversation completely differs from that in the book, but the words, although not spoken by Carlisle, do appear at various points in Stevens’ narrative. The film takes this opportunity to pass along information that the reader gleans during the course of the novel. After Stevens initially denies having worked for Darlington, Carlisle informs him (and the viewers) that Darlington had tried to make a deal with Hitler, sued a newspaper for libel, and, fortunately for him, was never tried for treason (information Cardinal tells Stevens, 224, and Stevens tells Miss Kenton, 235). Stevens then admits that he had not been truthful: “I did know Lord Darlington and I can declare that he was a truly good man, a gentleman through and through to whom I’m proud to have given my best years of service” (straight from Stevens’ commentary, 61). Cardinal’s conversation with Stevens in the novel is too long and speechified for a film to retain. Jhabvala makes that scene a more reasonable length for a viewing audience. On the other hand, Carlisle’s conversation with Stevens is rather short in the novel. He would have been more curious about Stevens than he appears in Stevens’ narrative. Jhabvala makes this scene plausible by giving Carlisle a more substantial dialogue. She finds an appropriate place for Stevens to speak what he writes as commentary in his journal--his feelings on working for Darlington.

The content of their closing remarks comes directly from Stevens' chat with the man on the pier at Weymouth, a scene the movie omits but from which it retains some of the dialogue in this conversation between Stevens and Carlisle and later with Stevens and Miss Kenton when they meet again. For the sake of time, the screenwriter must condense scenes. The stranger on the pier in the novel is nameless and not so very significant that he must be present in the film. But the words he speaks have an impact on how Stevens decides to live the rest of his life and absolutely must be spoken by someone in the film.

Stevens tells Carlisle that, as a butler, he trusted his employer completely. The movie skirts the heart of the ethical issue of Stevens' own culpability in blindly trusting in and serving his loyally misguided employer. Although, as book reviewer Phoebe-Lou Adams points out, "questions of moral responsibility lurk behind the novel's highly polished surface," the book never actually addresses issues of "moral responsibility" (135+). In the film Carlisle asks Stevens: "If a mistake was to be made, wouldn't you rather have made your own?" In his response Stevens seems to recognize only a mistake of a different nature: "In a very small way I did make my own mistake, but I might still have a chance to set mine right. In fact I'm on my way to try to do so now." The movie emphasizes the mistake he made in his relationship with Miss Kenton and neglects his accountability for his role in serving the cause of fascism by serving Darlington. In the novel Stevens' self-questioning occurs in a conversation with the stranger on the pier: "I can't even say I made my own mistakes. Really--one has to ask oneself--what dignity is there in that?" (243). He never claims to be trying to correct the mistake to which he alludes in the film of not pursuing an intimate relationship with Miss Kenton. The reader senses his regret when, after he has been reflecting on his meeting with Miss Kenton, he tells the man on the pier that he "gave

[Lord Darlington] the best I had to give,” rather than giving himself the best he has to give in a life with Miss Kenton (242). But just as, if not more, importantly, the book stresses Stevens’ anagnorisis of his loss of “dignity” by his failure at “serving humanity” through his employer (117), his life’s ambition, which he prided himself on having attained in his service to Darlington.

As Stevens drives away from Carlisle, the movie dissolves into a scene of Stevens ironing the newspaper, which he apparently never reads since he has no awareness of political affairs. When he takes the paper into Darlington, his employer praises him because his polished silver made such a fine impression on Lord Halifax, who sends his compliments. In the book, Stevens takes great pride in having “made a small, but significant contribution towards the easing of relations between Lord Halifax and Herr Ribbentrop that evening” because of his well-polished silver (136). At this point in the film, Darlington expresses his sorrow at having dismissed the Jewish housemaids and his desire to “do something for them” because “it was wrong, what occurred.” He also says the latter sentence in the book. Note that by saying “it,” he does not admit that he himself was “wrong.” The scene then cuts to the summerhouse where Stevens tells Miss Kenton what Darlington told him about the Jewish maids. Their conversation contains many of their words from the book with an interesting exception. In the novel Miss Kenton asks Stevens, “why do you always have to *pretend*?” (154), with “pretend” italicized. But on screen she asks him, “why do you always have to hide what you feel?” The film stresses his repressed emotions whereas the book emphasizes his pretensions for the sake of “dignity”—“a butler’s ability not to abandon the professional being he inhabits” (42). An actor can show repressed emotions but cannot express his continuous personal thoughts on “dignity” very easily, whereas a

novel's narrator can expound on a personal conviction time and again in non-dialogue commentaries.

At this juncture in the film Miss Kenton observes Stevens watching Lizzie (Lisa in the book, hired now rather than earlier), the housemaid she had hired against Stevens' better judgment. She teases him about his not liking "to have pretty girls on the staff" in a condensed dialogue from the book (156). In the novel Stevens next relates that this housemaid runs off with the footman, who remains unnamed. The movie, however, uncharacteristically adds a scene not witnessed by Stevens--Miss Kenton, carrying an armful of flowers, encounters Lizzie and Charlie kissing. Then, observed only by film-goers, the lovers discuss whether Miss Kenton will understand Lizzie's resigning because of their love for each other. Charlie poses the question: "Who do you think those pretty flowers are for she's been picking?" The camera cuts to Miss Kenton's bringing the flowers into Stevens' room, where he dozes with a book in a chair. The movie links the lovers to the relationship between Miss Kenton and Stevens. In this scene in which Jhabvala again condenses the dialogue from the book, Miss Kenton flirtatiously tries to get Stevens to show her the book he is reading. As she pries his fingers from the book (in much the same way Stevens pries his father's fingers from the trolley--this action is the only physical contact these characters have with each other), Stevens gazes intently at Miss Kenton with a sort of romantic, puzzled expression. In the book, however, Stevens determinedly looks away, but their close proximity forces him into "twisting my head away at a somewhat unnatural angle" (167). The close-up of Stevens beholding Miss Kenton effectively shows his confused attraction and the emotionally charged atmosphere: "the atmosphere underwent a peculiar change--almost as though the two of us had been suddenly thrust on to some other plane of being altogether"

(166-67). The movie misses Stevens' feelings about Miss Kenton catching him "off duty" (168). According to the novel, she catches him at a moment when he does not "*inhabit* his role" as butler and, therefore, threatens his maintaining a "dignity in keeping with his position" (169). In the film Stevens appears to feel that she has invaded his privacy. The viewer does not know that only when he is alone can he "unburden himself of his role" (169). Miss Kenton sees him in a position lacking "dignity," which goes against his principles. In another scene which Stevens does not observe, and which is not in the book, Charlie takes Lizzie to give Miss Kenton her notice. After Lizzie tells her that she and Charlie are getting married, Miss Kenton raises her concern: "I've seen this happen so many times before, a young girl rushing into marriage only to be disappointed in the end." Miss Kenton herself ironically ends up hastily marrying Benn "only to be disappointed" because she "thought of [her marriage] as simply another ruse . . . to annoy [Stevens]" (238-39). After we see Lizzie and Charlie ecstatically race down the hall holding hands, the scene cuts to Stevens and Miss Kenton discussing the lovers.

After they talk about the young couple, Miss Kenton irritably tells Stevens that she is "very, very tired." Offended, Stevens suggests that they stop their evening discussions. Although she protests that "only tonight" she is tired and finds their meetings "very useful," he insists on their future communications taking place during the day, even "by written message." Their film conversation of that evening follows that of the novel (174), but in the book Stevens later regrets his insisting that they discontinue their meetings: "this small decision of mine constituted something of a key turning point; that that decision set things on an inevitable course towards what eventually happened" (175). He also thinks that another "turning point" may have occurred "that evening she came in with her vase of flowers" (176). A third possible "turning point" may

have happened when he bungled his condolences to her after her aunt's death. Since the film mentions no aunt, however, this scene in which he intends to offer his sympathies but instead tells her that she is "remiss" in her work never takes place. Stevens feels that these "turning points" may have been what "render[ed] whole dreams forever irredeemable" (179). The viewer cannot see what Stevens feels after he sends her out of his room upon her seeing the book he had been reading or after he decides to cancel their evening sessions. The film does not highlight turning points but instead relies on Hopkins' gestures and line delivery to get across the importance of his missed opportunities for connection. Hopkins shows that, at times, Stevens feels uncomfortable around Miss Kenton and sometimes responds coldly to her. Because the film, however, cannot get across the inner thoughts Stevens writes in his narrative, the viewer does not know that Stevens ever feels a need "to remedy the effect of this or that misunderstanding" (179). The reader finds Stevens' regrets interspersed throughout his narrative, but the viewer sees Stevens' disappointment only at the end of the film when he finally parts with Miss Kenton. Film cannot catch Stevens' present-day thoughts as he reflects past moments because of the limitations of film.

In the film Stevens watches through the window as Miss Kenton rides her bike toward the village. In yet one more scene in which Stevens is not present, Benn proposes to and kisses Miss Kenton. Both address each other by their Christian names, Tom and Sally, appropriately nonexistent in Stevens' narrative because he never refers to anyone by a first name. But for the movie's narrative this intimate couple certainly would have been on a first-name basis with each other, and Jhabvala gives the couple Christian names. Stevens' looking through the window suggests that he knows about Miss Kenton's night off, but he can have no personal knowledge of their conversation. The scene could not possibly take place in Stevens' first-person narrative

unless Stevens had been present. With this invented scene, the film effectively captures what the reader infers from Stevens' narrative. This rare inclusion in the film of a scene Stevens could not have witnessed serves to emphasize his exclusion from the world of relationships, sociability, and the connection he keeps avoiding.

The film cuts to Stevens bringing Darlington a nightcap, then to Cardinal's unexpected arrival that night, and finally Stevens informing Miss Kenton of his arrival. Just before she leaves for her night off, she tells Stevens of Benn's proposal and that she is considering it. But to her disappointment, she gets no indication from Stevens that her information is of any concern to him. While Stevens serves Darlington and Cardinal, the latter attempts, in vain, to get Darlington to reveal the identity of the mysterious guests who arrive shortly. Cars arrive with the prime minister and Lord Halifax, followed by the German ambassador, whose assistants point out to him, in German, some of Darlington's valuable room decorations. The German ambassador tells them to "make note of them." Again Stevens does not hear or see the German interaction here, nor is it in the book. This film scene shows what the reader can fathom only through much obfuscation from Stevens' muddled perception, that Darlington is indeed being manipulated by the Germans. Such a scene quickly fills the viewer in on a crucial truth that it is the burden of Stevens' whole present-day journey to uncover for himself. The result is clarity for the audience at the cost of the obscurity and gradual revelation that characterize the novel. The viewer, unlike the reader, does not have the opportunity to make inferences from Stevens' written narration. The film clears up any confusion the viewer would have about the German influence on Darlington.

Upon Miss Kenton's return, Stevens must identify her to the guests' security guards. She asks him whether he is not at least interested in what she told Benn. When she tells him that she has accepted Benn's marriage proposal, he merely congratulates her. Their ensuing conversation is comparable to that of the book. Afterwards, Stevens takes Cardinal a drink, upon which Cardinal asks him, "Not feeling unwell, are you?" Cardinal then queries Stevens on his thoughts about Darlington's being "manoeuvred" by the Nazis. He asks Stevens whether he is not "curious" about the events taking place and points out that the American had been right at that conference when he called Darlington an "amateur." Cardinal's words to Stevens are in keeping with the novel (220-25). When his father died, Cardinal also asked Stevens whether he was all right. On both of these emotional occasions, Stevens could not completely mask his feelings, but he "managed to preserve a 'dignity in keeping with my position,' . . . in a manner even my father might have been proud of" (227). Again, because the film does not have Stevens make his philosophical statements out loud, the importance of maintaining a "dignity" noteworthy of his father does not come across in the film. We do see, however, through Hopkins' masterly performance, the effect of that philosophy and a hint of strong emotions dutifully checked. The film adds a scene in which Stevens shows his extraordinary ability to mask his emotions. After dropping a bottle of wine in the cellar, he hears Miss Kenton crying. He enters her room where he finds her kneeling on the floor crying. Instead of offering words of comfort, he chides her for not properly overseeing one of the maid's duties. This scene has the effect of the one from the book in which Miss Kenton's aunt dies. Stevens has repressed emotion for dignity's sake to the extent that his emotionally crippled response does not show his sympathy for Miss Kenton. After

she responds to him in a professional manner, crushed, she resumes crying over the footstool beside her.

The movie cuts to Stevens' present motoring journey, with the camera looking over his shoulder again, an odd moment to suggest his point of view since the next scene is one to which Stevens is not privy, and again does not take place in the novel. Miss Kenton is getting ready for meeting Stevens after all these years. Benn, waiting for her, informs her that their daughter is expecting a baby and tells her, "The house is empty without you, Sal." So much of the film gives the impression that the viewers see along with Stevens that this scene seems out of place in the movie. Jhabvala here prepares the viewer for Miss Kenton's return to a husband who loves her and to anticipate a soon-to-be-disappointed Stevens. The film audience is thereby tipped off in a manner impossible in the novel, which is not only narrated by a character who could not have witnessed any such interaction but also in a journal format that precludes at the time of narrating any knowledge of later outcomes. While Stevens awaits her arrival in the tearoom at the hotel, the viewers hear a voice-over of Miss Kenton's letter, as films generally handle letters, as though through the reader's ear. Upon her appearance the movie dissolves into people dancing romantically to "Blue Moon" just below them. Their topics of conversation and much of their dialogue come from the book.

In the film, however, they also converse while walking along a pier. The two of them watch the pier lights go on, and Miss Kenton tells him, "They do say that for a great many people the evening is the best part of the day, the part they most look forward to." A man on a pier conveys these sentiments to Stevens in the final scene of the book (243), a crucial scene the film omits, transferring the key lines to this scene of final parting. In the novel, while they wait at the

bus stop in the pouring rain, Miss Kenton tells Stevens, "I get to thinking about a life I may have had with you, Mr. Stevens" (239), words Jhabvala does not have her explicitly say; instead she says only that she may have made a "mistake with my life." Miss Kenton's words in this present-day scene of the novel dispel any doubt the readers or Stevens may have regarding her feelings toward Stevens. Up to this point, the readers have only Stevens' questionable memory and sense of what their relationship was like, whereas the film-goers see their relationship all along.

Jhabvala deletes the personal parts of the conversation which seem out of character for these individuals, who, from what we know of them, would not speak so intimately to each other out of a sense of propriety. Jhabvala's screenplay portrays the characters in a light more in keeping with their personalities by correcting an infelicity in the novel.

Jhabvala creates a new ending for the film. At Darlington Hall, in a room with a ping pong table, Lewis recalls the 1935 banquet and asks Stevens what he had said. Stevens claims to have been "too busy serving to listen to the speeches." His narrative in the book clearly shows that he listened quite closely to what Lewis said at this conference in March of 1923, but the viewer does not know to what extent Stevens listened and therefore misses the great impact his misplaced faith in Darlington has had on him all along, especially after his week's journey. That the film's conference takes place in 1935 rather than 1923, however, emphasizes Darlington's misguided Nazi sympathies just before the war. While Lewis and Stevens converse, a pigeon flies in through the chimney and tries to escape through the domed ceiling window. Lewis finally catches it and sets it free through the French doors, which Stevens then closes. The camera pans away, taking in a panoramic shot of Darlington Hall, isolated in a lush green countryside. The trite image of the freed bird followed by a panorama suggests Stevens' potential escape from the

prison he has made of the manor, a hopeful ending that the novel carefully avoids. Stevens' closing the doors suggests one of two possibilities: he may live a free and happy life in the manor now or he shuts the door on the freedom Lewis offers him.

Final Assessment

Stevens' narrative in the novel of *The Remains of the Day* goes from one analepsis to another. His interpolated narrative shows how his present point of view and feelings are changing from his past ones. Through numerous retrospections Stevens gradually gains introspection into the nature of the "dignity" in his life until he experiences an epiphany which reveals to him that he blindly "trusted in his lordship's wisdom" and thereby lacked dignity because he merely "trusted I was doing something worthwhile" (243). Stevens does not have the epiphany in the film that he has two full days after he sees Miss Kenton, just before his talk with the stranger at the end of the book. For two days he makes no journal entries. His despair over his life is so demoralizing that he cannot write until he finds something to live for. After he realizes that he cannot spend the rest of his days with Miss Kenton and that he has not attained the dignity of working for an employer of superior moral status, he discovers that he still has "the remains of the day" to make the most of his life.

Stevens' retrospective journey gave him insights into who he is. Up to now, book reviewer Pico Iyer notes, Stevens has kept a "safe distance from warmth or wit or risk, . . . permitting himself neither opinions, nor curiosity, nor even, really, self" (588). Now that he recognizes what his life has been missing, ways in which he has wasted it, he no longer, in Miss Kenton's words, "always [has] to *pretend*" for his employer or for dignity's sake (154). In his book review, John W. Donohue regards Stevens' life as not necessarily "wholly wasted. . . . He

always did first-class work, and that was a real achievement" (129). His exemplary work as head butler may certainly count for something in Stevens' life, even though it was misdirected because of the delusions he lived under. Can he guide his life in a worthwhile direction now?

As he observes strangers warmly "bantering" on a pier, Stevens comes to the conclusion that "in bantering lies the key to human warmth" (245). He does not know that "human warmth" is not a skill one improves with practice but rather a feeling that emanates from within. Although he no longer has to "inhabit" the role of butler for his employer, he metaphorically closes the door on his newfound revelation and reverts to serving his employer. He will dutifully hone the skill of "bantering" to please his employer. In the film Lewis sets a pigeon free, a cliché for Stevens' being set free to live a life for himself. Yet perhaps Stevens' closing the doors shows that he prefers to remain in the comfortable role he knows best of inhabiting the role of a butler who lives for his employer. The narrative concludes with Stevens choosing once again to live his life for his master rather than himself. Buruma points out that in the film, "The point is made. The irony is lost" (40). Stevens obviously rejects the freedom his new master offers him. In the novel, however, he ironically sets the self-imposed duty of "bantering" to please his new employer as his new *raison d'être*, and he hopes to attain "the key to human warmth" rather than "dignity" this time. Because "bantering" is not an issue for Stevens in the film, the irony of his new life's goal is missing in the movie.

Grenier believes that even though Stevens' final thoughts from the novel are not expressed in the film, "in a remarkable acting tour de force, Anthony Hopkins has managed to convey their meaning" (65+). Throughout the novel's narrative, Stevens worries that he may be disappointing his new American employer by not fulfilling an expected duty of "bantering," and his various

highly amusing attempts at “bantering,” interspersed in the novel, lead the reader to this final scene. I disagree with Grenier: the significance “bantering” plays in the novel is, unfortunately, lost in the film. Stevens decides to spend “the remains of the day” once again inhabiting the role of butler but ironically fulfilling the duty of “bantering” with his new American employer. Alleva completely disagrees with this assessment, however: “At the end of the novel, Stevens is still reverting to servile form and the concluding paragraph is the author’s joke at the character’s expense. At the end of the movie, Stevens, with dignity and self-knowledge, resigns himself to the sterility of his declining years, and we don’t dare laugh at him” (14+). Alleva completely misses the point and mistakes irony for the “author’s joke at the character’s expense.” He feels that “the poignancy of the title, *The Remains of the Day*, is more fully earned by the movie than by the book” (15). In an interview with book reviewer Susan Chira, Ishiguro says that he is “interested in how [my characters] come to terms with” their regrets (3). Stevens finds a way, as Ishiguro says, “to preserve a sense of dignity, some sort of self-respect” (Ishiguro in Chira 3) with his resolve to “banter.” Stevens’ concept of “bantering” in the novel is funny, but his optimism for how he will spend the “remains of the day” is an ironic but fittingly poignant ending to his narrative. Alleva’s overall review shows that he prefers the movie to the book. He feels that the movie improves upon the novel. Ishiguro’s irony and poignancy are too subtle for Alleva. What was lost in the adaptation for some of us appears as an improvement for others.

The significance of “bantering” and “dignity” to Stevens can be made clear only in the written language of the novel. Although the film dramatizes these words in Stevens’ demeanor, actions, and even in conversation, their underlying importance to him cannot be fully conveyed without getting into Stevens’ inner thoughts. Buruma agrees that “the story hinges on a concept

that can be expressed in words more easily than in moving pictures. . . . It is the idea of dignity, in the mind of Stevens as well as his master's, that links the politics in the story to the tragedy of the butler's emotional impotence" (39). The film cannot get at the heart of Stevens' emotional repression or show what ultimately motivates his future interaction with his new employer because it cannot visually show Stevens' concepts of "dignity" and "bantering."

Film, by nature, simply cannot delve into characters' thoughts without using some contrived means to do so. Film critic Nicholas Lezard feels, however, that the book's "realities sketchily apparent beneath Stevens's self-deluded narration, might have been the most difficult thing to put in the film, but it's there in Hopkins's performance" (21). Hopkins' brilliant performance perfectly expresses Stevens' being, but he cannot possibly show everything Stevens' expounds on in the novel's narrative. I concur with Buruma: "The result is that in the translation from book to film, Ishiguro's story has lost some of its finesse" (39). Visually, this splendid film is artistically appealing and the actors capture the essence of Ishiguro's intriguing characters and their relationships with one another. Jhabvala maintains most of the narrative strands in her screenplay, and under Ivory's masterful direction this superb film carries the thread of the narrative and the author's intent of Stevens' "com[ing] to terms with [his regrets]" while he "preserve[s] a sense of dignity, some sort of self-respect" (Ishiguro in Chira 3). The film also stands on its own as a wonderful work of art. Lezard, curiously, faults the movie for its fidelity to the book and lack of uniqueness: "The film's big problem is that its faithfulness to the book, and to the spirit of the book, stifles any independent life it might be able to muster for itself" (21). His criticism is highly unusual considering that critics and movie-goers tend to demand faithful adaptations. In an interview Ishiguro expressed his delight with the film: "I was pretty impressed

by it. I wasn't admiring my own work translated. I think the film had its own authority and its own world. It very quickly disarmed me. Very rapidly it sets up its own atmosphere, its own mood, and the actors are terrific" (Takahama 1105K6817). Even though Hopkins and Thompson did "not match the mental picture he had of the characters as he wrote the novel . . . he found no fault with the casting" (Takahama 1105K6817). Ishiguro recognizes that "different rules govern film. You have far less room to maneuver in a film. You have to be much stricter about unity. Everything has to get slimmed down. They went all out for wasted ambition, misplaced loyalties and wasted lives" (Takahama 1105K6817). Certainly a film must condense a novel-length narrative into a reasonable film length. But film, not being limited to the medium of language, also has the privilege of working with the media of vision, sound, lighting, set, and spatiality. Only through the medium of the written language, however, can Ishiguro's poetically philosophical nuances be illuminated.

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